

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2020

The Honorable Barbara M. Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Secretary Barrett,

As an Ohio delegation, we write to express our support to locate the US Space Command headquarters at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB).

Based on the criteria used during the strategic basing process, we believe WPAFB's robust and diversified workforce, location and tenant commands are uniquely suited to support the US Space Command mission and make the base the logical location for the headquarters. WPAFB's workforce of world-class engineers, experienced programs managers, innovative logistics managers, knowledgeable space specialists, change leading contracting personnel, and nationally recognized space intelligence analysts would provide the US Space Command with an exceptional supporting staff.

WPAFB is a unique base as it is centrally located in the United States and hosts the Air Force Material Command and the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC) headquarters. It also possesses the National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC), whose core missions of air and space intelligence and imagery are central tenets to the US Space Command mission. The men and women who work at WPAFB have mastered specific skills related to the acquisition of all major airframes and the research and development of engines and munitions as well as exploitation of the air and space domain for intelligence gathering.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and the Springfield Air National Guard Base are already home to the National Air and Space Intelligence Center and the 178th Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group, and the Air Force Research Laboratory. These missions already support key space-related operations including innovation in space components and technology, and NASIC is the Department of Defense's primary source for analyzing foreign space threats. Collocating the US Space Command headquarters with NASIC would generate an incredible synergy that would greatly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. The men and women at WPAFB are key to the success of our national security mission and are supported by the broader Dayton defense community's exceptional engineering and contracting specialists. Just south of WPAFB is the Midwestern campus for the Defense Acquisition University, which along with Dayton's research industry and universities, have long been the center for developing, acquiring, and sustaining the next level of air superiority to counter our adversaries and locating the US Space Command at WPAFB makes sense.

According to the report, “Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio enjoys low housing costs, a large commissary, a huge 300 bed medical center and a large exchange.” The report went on to say that “an above average crime score of 7 out of 10, and decent commute times...combine to help land Wright-Pat at the top of the list.” Though this report was released in 2014, those characteristics that made Wright-Patt the top base in the country still apply, and if anything those conditions have improved and would well serve the men and women of US Space Command in accomplishing their mission.

Wright-Patterson and Southwest Ohio, more broadly, benefit from access to a skilled workforce and numerous modes of transportation. The area’s vibrant and diverse workforce stands ready to support any construction required with this effort. The region’s workforce benefits from the numerous public and private colleges and universities in the area. There is an abundance of engineers and other technical professionals ready to work on projects and WPAFB.

WPAFB exceeds key criteria listed in the strategic basing process, specifically the capacity requirements for space, housing, and parking, and the relative low cost of construction. The greater Dayton region is home to exceptional educational programs that continue to develop engineering and acquisition professionals, who would enhance the effectiveness of US Space Command.

We saw in congressional testimony last year that service secretaries indicated two issues that would be of most importance in future basing decisions would be reciprocity of licensure for spouses and quality of schools. We are pleased that in January 2020, Governor Mike DeWine signed reciprocity legislation into law that would require state agencies to issue occupational licenses for military spouses if they held a license in another state. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper recently congratulated Governor DeWine and the State of Ohio for the reciprocity law which will improve the lives of service members and their families when they relocate to Ohio. Furthermore, in past basing evaluations against other military facilities, WPAFB has scored very high in average pupil to teacher ratio, and average high school graduation rate.

Additionally, in relative proximity is the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center and Plum Brook Station, both with exceptional experience and expertise in space missions. Specifically, NASA Glenn Research Center’s excellence in electric propulsion, among many other areas, helped the Space and Missile Center’s Advanced Extremely High Frequency satellite in 2011 use Hall thrusters to gain its proper orbit when the main engine failed. Plum Brook Station offers remarkable capabilities to improve United States Space Force mission assurance including the world’s largest thermal vacuum chamber, the first full-scale end-to-end electromagnetic interference test array and the only thermal vacuum chamber capable of rocket engine firing. Further, NASA Glenn collaborates with industry, academia, and other federal agencies in developing advanced technologies related to air-breathing and electric propulsion (aeronautics and space), cryogenic fluids management, power and energy, communications technologies, physical sciences and biomedical technologies, and materials and structures.

We gladly offer to work with US Space Command to advance this project if Wright-Patt is selected. The state of Ohio has a proud history of contributing to the nation’s defense and to other government projects, like Camp James A. Garfield Joint Military Training Center.

Locating the headquarters for US Space Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base would represent a significant contribution to this legacy. We appreciate your consideration of Wright-Patterson Air Force base as the future home as the headquarters of US Space Command and look forward to your response.

Thank you for your consideration of WPAFB as the possible location for the US Space Command headquarters.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot
Member of Congress

Jim Jordan
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

Steve Stivers
Member of Congress

Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress

Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress

Warren Davidson
Member of Congress

Bill Johnson
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress

David P. Joyce
Member of Congress

Troy Balderson
Member of Congress

CC: John Henderson, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Installations, Environment,
and Energy